
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

A. Purpose and Scope

This issuance describes the National Cancer Institute's Research Training Award. It is a general fellowship award as well as an "umbrella" appointing mechanism for other NCI specialized training programs.

The legislative authorities for this training initiative are as follows:

- (1) Section 405 (b) (1) (C) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 USC 284 (b) (1) (C), as amended, which authorizes Directors of each national research institute to conduct and support research training for which fellowship support is not provided under section 487 and which is not **residency** training of physicians or other health professionals.
- (2) Section 413 (b) (3) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 USC 285a-2 (b) (3), as amended pertaining to the National Cancer Institute, which states that the Director, NCI, in carrying out the National Cancer Program . . . shall . . . "support appropriate programs of education and training (including continuing education and laboratory and clinical research training)".
- (3) As defined in the implementing regulations at 42 CFR, 63.3, "the purpose of an NIH research traineeship is to provide support for financial subsistence to an individual during a period in which the awardee is acquiring training in: (a) basic and/or clinical biomedical or behavioral research relating to human health, including extending healthy life and reducing the burdens of illness, or (b) medical library science or related fields pertaining to sciences related to health or the communication of health sciences information. Traineeships are intended to make available in the United States an increased number of persons having special competence in these research fields through developmental training and practical research experience in the facilities of NIH, with supplemental training at other qualified institutions (see 63.8)."

Participants in this program do not perform a service for the Public Health Service. Rather, the Fellows are accepted for training in scientific disciplines that will enhance public health efforts to prevent, diagnose, or treat cancer, a problem of major public health significance. Fellows receive a stipend and are considered to be in training status. They are not considered employees of the Federal government.

=====

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

B. Rationale/Justification

Utilization of one appointment mechanism with standard set initial and renewal stipends for specific categories will provide consistent and uniform provisions for the diverse training fellowship programs supported throughout NCI's Divisions and Offices. It would also greatly streamline the application processing requirements. Use of the NIH Visiting Fellow Program will continue to be utilized for non-citizens.

=====

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

C. Basic Program Provisions

Candidates may apply directly to the NCI Lab/Branch/Office performing research in areas of interest. NCI sponsors are responsible for developing an individualized training program, including specific training plans for each awardee, and are responsible for providing advice, guidance, and instruction to each fellow under their sponsorship, as well as periodically evaluating progress and performance.

1. Training Opportunities - The Cancer Research Training Award is designed to provide training for individual who meet the degree eligibility criteria of the following Categories:

Category 1 - PreBaccalaureate: For selected high school or college undergraduate students who have not attained a Bachelor's degree.

Category 2 - Bachelor's Degree: For individuals who have a Bachelor's degree.

At this post-baccalaureate level, individuals with superior academic

achievement of a cumulative 3.5 grade-point average or greater (out of 4.0 maximum) may be credited with a two-level increase in initial stipend.

Individuals will receive hands-on specialized training. This experience will provide practical training for some individuals to become more effective and proficient in a staff support career; for some to become familiar with the latest, state-of-the-art procedures and equipment for reentry into the job market; and for others it may be a training interlude prior to entering into a formal graduate or more advanced degree program.

This category would apply also to students who are enrolled in graduate, law, or medical school who have not yet completed course requirements to be recognized by their university as doctoral degree candidates.

Category 3 - Master's Degree: Candidates at this level must have a Master's degree. Students who have a Master's degree and are working toward a more advanced degree could be appointed under this Category also.

Category 4 - Doctoral Degree Candidate: Students must have completed course requirements, passed qualifiers, and be formally recognized by the university as a doctoral degree candidate.

Doctoral degree candidates are engaged in a research project for the purpose of developing and writing a thesis.

Upon certification of completion of the doctoral degree requirements, a postdoctoral fellowship award may be approved.

Category 5 - Postdoctoral Degree (PhD, MD without direct patient contact, DVM, & JD) - For some fellows, this may be their first Postdoctoral training assignment. It may also offer more experienced Postdoctoral scientists an opportunity to further their training in more advanced (and emerging) methods, to acquire new research capabilities, to make changes in the direction of their research, or to receive training in fundamental sciences and clinical disciplines for the purpose of enhancing the transfer of biotechnology to cancer clinical programs.

The Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986, as amended, requires federal agencies to facilitate the transfer of government developed technology to the private commercial sector. To this end, opportunities may be available for individuals with a law degree (JD) to develop expertise in the development, implementation, and evaluation of current and emerging methods for technology transfer.

Category 6 - Medical Degree (MD engaged in patient care with a

continuing and/or continuing patient contact who have been trained in a US-recognized residency program)

This category will provide training opportunities for physicians (1) to receive additional clinical training, (2) to seek laboratory training as part of their academic preparation, and (3) to get training in biomedical research.

An MD, who currently has a Clinical Associate (SF or CO) service appointment, may receive a Cancer Fellowship Award to remain at NCI for additional training. An individual moved to a fellowship should not be performing the same duties he or she performed as an employee. Care must be taken to insure that such an individual understands that he or she is no longer an employee, that his or her training assignment operates for his or her principal benefits, and that the traineeship is not viewed as compensation or consideration for personal services rendered to the NIH.

A Clinical Associate (SF) may enter at a fellowship stipend equivalent to their ending SF salary.

The stipend for a Clinical Associate (CO) will be determined on a case-by-case basis so that there is no net loss in pay after considering such factors as base pay, deductions, and other allowances.

The sponsoring Division must inform Fellows engaged in clinical research training assignments involving direct patient care that the CRTA is a training program and that they are not considered employees of the Federal government. Important information on **Tort Claims Coverage and Medical Liability Insurance** appears under Section F. Benefits, Paragraph 5.

Category 7 - Specialty Competitive Allowances - For the identified specialty shortages (as identified in Appendix 1, Category 7), the exceptional level resides in the degree not in the individual.

An annual allowance for each specialty may be applied to the stipend for qualified individuals based on their highest degree attained.

Category 8 - Research Scholars Program - The Research Scholar Program is an Exceptional Category which combines a K22 Career Transition Grant Award with a CRTA appointment allowing the Principal Investigator to take their intramural research training experience to an academic institution.

An annual RFA announcement will be advertised formally in the *NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts* as well as scientific, clinical, and epidemiological journals.

In addition to a regular CRTA, see Appendix 2 for other available NCI Specialized Training Programs.

Typical training assignments have been focused on basic or clinical biomedical research or in areas related to the communication of health sciences information. The appropriateness and need to establish training programs in related fields to facilitate research have grown. NCI will support developmental training fellowships in research management and administrative.

For instance, a fellowship in research management and support might include: assignment in an extramural research environment where training activities are critical to effective scientific review, evaluation, and management.

Greater authorities are being delegated to program staff and therefore, having development training opportunities in activities directly related to research administration would be an invaluable mechanism which will directly support our overall goal in providing efficient laboratory management.

Institute-wide information systems are created through problem definition and tracking in the areas of infrastructure planning, core support services, and information management. These activities are germane to our scientific community and provide innovative new information systems which are critical to the effective conduct of science.

2. Training Schedule - Training is on a full-time basis.

In addition to summer assignments, an award for full-time training may be made during the school year for predoctoral students in good academic standing enrolled in at least half time academic work.

On the rare occasion when a high school, undergraduate, or graduate student may be unable to devote full-time to training because of academic course requirements, an acceptable prearranged part-time tour may be negotiated with the sponsor and documented in writing. Intermittent schedules are not permitted. While an annual appointment may be made, the fellowship approval and activation period may be processed in no more than two funding increments a year for accounting purposes. For part-time periods, the stipend is prorated based on the amount paid to similarly qualified students as shown in Appendix 1, under the appropriate predoctoral Category (1, 2, or 3).

3. Initial Award Periods - Initial appointments are for a minimum of two months and may be authorized for up to a two-year period (see paragraph 4.e. on non-tenured duration policy). (Accounting procedures and appropriation law require that the fellowship award be made one year at a time.) (For the occasional student who

requires a part-time schedule, no more than two approval and activation periods in a year may be processed -- see 2. Training Schedule).

4. **Award Duration:** In Appendix 4, a chart is provided to document the relevant experience in determining CRTA eligibility for the initial appointment and for calculating the duration for a pre- or post-doctoral trainee. A copy of the chart should be retained in the official file for the CRTA awardee.

a. Predoctoral Categories - For individuals with a Bachelor or Master degree, the CRTA is a two-year program **at any one Category**. In rare circumstances, the Division Director may recommend that the NCI Deputy Director for Management authorize an extension for a TERMINAL 3rd Year. Written documentation must describe the ongoing need for training, rotational assignments, and the experience to be gained.

Undergraduate or graduate students may participate in the CRTA program for the lesser of two options: (1) as long as they remain in good academic standing, until they are awarded a degree OR (2) up to five years.

b. Doctoral Degree Candidate Category - The maximum duration will normally be three years or until the candidate receives their doctoral degree, whichever comes first. Renewals beyond three years may be approved without an increase in stipend. The Division Director may recommend that the NCI Deputy Director for Management authorize an extension.

c. Postdoctoral & Medical Categories - For these Categories, the CRTA is a 5-year program. A TERMINAL 6th year as a CRTA will only be considered under extraordinary circumstances -- it must be recommended by the respective Division Director, through the Deputy Director for Management and be approved by the Director, NCI. **(All renewals are contingent on total duration of stay at NIH, which cannot exceed a maximum of 8 years for any type of doctoral level position, as described in paragraph 4.e. below).**

d. Research Scholars Category - The intramural phase is 3 years with a transition 4th year. (At the end of 3 years, upon NCI approval and identification of a sponsoring home institution, the K award will be activated. Unsuccessful results will lead to a 1-year phase out.) The extramural phase under the K22 grant cannot exceed 2 years.

e. NIH Non-Tenured Duration Policy for Postdoctoral Fellows - In February 1995, the NIH Office of Intramural Research implemented a new policy on the duration of training and service fellowships. This policy states that Postdoctoral Trainees should generally not remain at the NIH for more than five (5) years, unless additional years are justified and approved in writing by the respective Division Director with copies

provided to the fellow and the DDIR.

An overall limitation exists of not more than eight (8) years at the NIH, regardless of appointment mechanism, unless the scientists in approved for tenure tract, tenure, staff scientists, staff physician, or other permanent appointment. All postdoctoral training time spent in all mechanisms (e.g., temporary, term, Special Expert, Special Volunteer, Guest Researcher, and training and service fellowships) counts toward this eight (8) year limitation. Therefore, TOTAL non-tenured service record at NIH i.e., non-FTE and FTE years of services, must be calculated prior to setting the length of the appointment or extension.

Any exceptional requests for consideration beyond this limitation must be brought to the attention of the Deputy Director for Management prior to preparing a formal request to the DDIR.

f. Exceptions - When a complete change to a different career track requires additional training time, individual exceptions beyond the above duration limitations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Written justifications must be recommended by respective Division Directors for approval by the Deputy Director for Management, NCI.

Examples of this would include switching from an intramural laboratory assignment to developmental training in an extramural research environment or to research management, administration, science policy, and technology transfer activities.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

D. Qualifications

1. The Cancer Research Training Award is established for U.S. citizens or resident aliens.
2. Candidates must be at least 16 years of age (students under 18 will be required to obtain parental consent and a work permit)
3. A copy of the degree diploma or degree certification from the Dean or Registrar must be provided OR predoctoral students (i.e., Categories 1, 2, 3, & 4) must provide enrollment documentation from their affiliated school, university,

medical/graduate school that they are in good academic standing and enrolled at least half time in academic work. For doctoral degree candidates, students must provide official documentation that they are considered doctoral degree candidates.

4. Postdoctoral and Medical trainees will have less than 5 years of relevant Postdoctoral (or equivalent) experience. Individuals with over 5 years, BUT NO MORE than 8 years of relevant Postdoctoral experience, may be appointed if recommended by the respective Lab/Br Chief and approved by the Division Director.

5. Research Scholars may have no more than 5 years of Postdoctoral research training (years of clinical training are not counted against the 5 years). Individuals who have previously held professorship or equivalent academic appointments OR principal investigators on research grants are not eligible.

6. Relatives of NCI employees may be appointed. However, any direct or indirect sponsorship between relatives must be avoided. No NCI employee may sponsor either directly or indirectly any NCI fellowship award to a relative. Furthermore, the NCI employee may not advocate or participate in the review, evaluation, or selection of any fellowship application involving a relative.

NOTE: The prohibition of nepotism policy, contained in NIH Manual Issuance 2300-310-3, defines RELATIVE as aunt, brother, brother-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, father, father-in-law, first cousin, grandchild, grandparent, half brother, half sister, legal guardian, mother, mother-in-law, nephew, niece, sister, sister-in-law, son, son-in-law, spouse, stepbrother, stepdaughter, stepfather, stepmother, stepsister, stepson, uncle, and NIH extends to include close, personal relationships between consenting persons who share the same household.

7. See Appendix 2 for any additional qualification requirements under a specialized NCI Training Program.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

E. Stipends

1. Set stipends for CRTA awardees are paid from NCI funds in accordance with the stipend Categories identified in Appendix 1.

2. If a doctoral degree candidate has an existing CRTA appointment with a higher stipend under either Category 2 or 3 and becomes a doctoral candidate, the last stipend level may be used for conversion into Category 4.

3. An annual allowance for certain specialties (identified in Appendix 1,

Category 7) may be added to the stipend for qualified individuals based on their highest degree attained. This does not apply however to Research Scholars (Category 8).

4. The CRTA may augment funding provided by an outside sponsor, but not another U.S. Government fellowship. Acceptance of outside fellowship support is at the discretion of the sponsor and must be in the best interest of NCI to accept. In such circumstances, the combined stipend (including health insurance, travel, and dependency and other allowances) from both sources may not exceed authorized limits for similarly qualified fellows under a fully funded CRTA.

5. No dependent's allowance is provided.

6. The initial stipend check will be issued at the end of the first month of training. The fellow must designate a direct deposit to a financial institution. Stipends are paid in arrears. Upon notification from the Office of Financial Management, NIH Checks are electronically transmitted by the Treasury Department, and are usually received by the financial institution on the first working day of each month.

7. The Executive Committee will periodically review the stipend Categories for appropriateness vis-a-vis awards for other fellowship programs and as necessary recommend adjustment to the Director, NCI. The Director, NCI after receiving advice from the Executive Committee may authorize across-the-board adjustments in the stipend Categories.

8. Permitted annual set increases are described in Stipend Categories in Appendix 1. This policy is consistent with other training awards including those from outside philanthropic organizations. Such increases may not be awarded more than once during each 52 calendar week period and should be processed in connection with the fellowship award renewal.

=====

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

F. Benefits

1. Health Insurance: The Fellow must be covered by adequate health insurance in order to receive training in NIH facilities. An approved plan of health insurance is available through the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences (FAES). Individuals must have at least a 3-month appointment and be in status for at least 32 hours a week to be eligible for coverage through the FAES.

Funds for family, low-option health insurance are provided by the sponsoring NCI division or OD office from NCI funds in addition to the regular stipend. Fellows may arrange with FAES for the difference between low- and high-option coverage to be withheld from their stipend. Alternatively, a monthly health insurance premium amount (payable at the FAES low option rate for either family or individual coverage) can be made in monthly stipend check for fellows who participate in their own name in a private plan.

Fellows may use the Occupational Medical Service in the event of injuries or the need for emergency care in the workplace.

2. Excused Absence:

a. Paid Absence - Since fellows are not employees, they do not earn annual or sick leave. They are, however, excused on federal holidays. At the discretion of the sponsor, fellows may be excused for reasonable cause (such as ill health and personal emergencies) and may be granted a reasonable period annually for vacation.

It is recommended that trainees be granted up to six weeks of paid, full time, excused absence for the delivery of a baby, with flexibility being determined by the sponsor. In addition, at least 2 weeks of flexible excused absence for adoption or paternity leave may be granted. Although stipends and health insurance allowance continue through such periods of excused absence, the period of the fellowship award is not extended due to lost time.

b. Unpaid Absence - A break in the award without stipend may be approved by the sponsor with concurrence from respective Lab/Br/Office Chief. The Fellowship Payment Office must receive advance written notification of the effective date to temporarily stop as well as one to resume payment. Care must be exercised if the time period exceeds the dates specified on the current "Fellowship Activation Notice". Health insurance coverage must be paid by fellow commencing with the first full month of absence. (See Appendix 7 for sample request memo and further instructions.)

3. Travel:

a. Travel to NIH - At the discretion of the sponsoring Lab/Branch/Office, travel for fellows, appointed for more than one (1) year, may be authorized airfare or mileage & per diem on a travel order and reimbursed in accordance

with U.S. Government travel regulations. No dependent's or return travel is authorized.

In addition, and also at the discretion of the Lab/Branch/Office Chief, other transportation allowances, including travel, shipment of household goods, and temporary storage (if necessary) may be permissible but must be authorized on NIH-2028 prior to relocation. The total allowance for travel, shipment of household goods, and temporary storage cannot exceed \$2,500.

b. Travel to Scientific Meetings - While at NIH, allowances to attend scientific meetings or field research visits may be authorized. All requests must be initiated by the sponsor and must be submitted in advance for approval on a travel order and must be carried out in accordance with Government travel regulations.

4. Training:

a. Training Tuition - Cancer fellows may receive government sponsorship for training. All training must be directly related to NCI's mission and the objectives of the fellowship and must be approved by the authorized officials. NOTE: Training which extends beyond the expiration date of the fellow's appointment, cannot be authorized.

b. Laboratory Safety Training - Individuals who will be working with animals or may be exposed to hazardous situations must receive appropriate training in biosafety, handling of hazardous materials including radioactive isotopes, and proper animal care and treatment.

NOTE: Minors (under the age of 18) cannot be assigned to a laboratory using radioactive materials which exceed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) required dosage levels.

c. Supplemental Training - Supplemental training at a facility away from NCI, including foreign institutions, that is directly related to the purpose of the traineeship and necessary to its successful completion may be approved by the Director, NCI.

NOTE: Centers, Divisions, and OD offices at NIH, which do not have statutory training authority, may not transfer funds to NCI for NCI's use in funding a trainee. Such a transfer

of funds would be viewed as a misuse of appropriations. NCI may assign trainees funded with its own appropriations to such entities provided such assignments are in furtherance of the training. Trainees must be remain under the preceptorship of an NCI employee.

5. Tort Claims: It is the opinion of the DHHS Office of the General Counsel (OGC) that CRTA Fellows would be eligible for coverage under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) (28 U.S.C. 2671 et seq.) for damages or injuries that arise from actions occurring within the scope of their assignment and while under the direct supervision of a Federal employee. The OGC opines that Fellows working under the preceptorship of NIH employees would be considered employees for all purposes relating to liability. However, the ultimate decisions on issues of liability are made by the courts on a case-by-case basis. Should claims arise from the actions of CRTA Fellows acting within the scope of their assignments, NIH would ask that they be defended by the Department of Justice as if they were Federal employees. Clinical procedures, therefore, should be performed under the direct supervision of an NCI Attending Physician in an NCI facility. Designated physicians must acquire patient care privileges and credentialing as required.

a. Medical Liability (Malpractice) Insurance - Until such a tort claims case is filed in the courts, a legal determination cannot be made. To insure protection for physicians receiving clinical training, who may not always be subject to the direct control and supervision of NCI employees, personally purchased medical liability insurance coverage must be acquired from either a group plan offered by the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences (FAES) or purchased privately in the amounts of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$3,000,000 in the aggregate, and "tail" coverage in the event a malpractice claim is filed after termination. If privately purchased, fellows will be reimbursed up to the lesser amount of either the FAES plan rate or the private policy.

b. Supplemental Clinical Training - If the supplemental training (which must be approved by the Director, NCI) is at a non-NIH facility, the outside institution to which the trainee is assigned must agree to cover the trainee for professional liability purposes. If at a foreign site, given the variation in how other countries process malpractice claims and the possible effects of such claims on practitioners, assignment of clinical research trainees abroad should be limited to those institutions which are willing to assume liability for the trainee.

6. Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) - Regardless of the site of training, trainees are deemed "employees" of the United States for purposes of coverage under FECA for disability due to personal injury or disease sustained while in the performance of the training assignment.

7. Parking, Identification Cards, and Property Passes: Cancer fellows may obtain parking permits, identification cards, and property passes in the same manner, and through the same administrative channels, as NIH employees.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

G. Deductions

1. Social Security: Since a Cancer Research Training Award is considered a training fellowship, Social Security is not deducted from the stipend. According to the NIH Legal Advisor, "Amounts received as scholarships or fellowship grants by degree or non-degree candidates are not wages for purposes of the Social Security Act. Nor would the award be considered earnings from self-employment for purposes of the Social Security Act, because it applies only to net earning from self-employment derived from a trade or business. For the same reasons, such awards are not subject to any Medicare deduction." In other words, the NIH Legal Advisor believes that awardees would not be considered self-employed for purposes of the Social Security Act, and therefore need not make Social Security or Medicare payment on their own behalf.

2. Retirement: Similarly, Cancer Research Training Awardees are not eligible to participate in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Information relevant to eligibility for IRA contributions can be accessed through the Postdoctoral/Clinical Fellows Committee FELCOM web site:

<ftp://helix.nih.gov/felcom/www/tax97.html>

3. Medicare: As with Social Security, Medicare is not deducted from stipends.

4. Income Tax:

a. Research fellowship training awards are subject to federal, state and local income taxes. Fellows are required

to file quarterly estimated federal and state income tax returns since no taxes are withheld from their stipends.

b. The Office of Financial Management, Fellowship Payroll Unit annually prepares a 1099G -- the stipend is considered a taxable grant award by IRS -- and sends appropriate income information to the IRS and to fellows at their home address of record.

c. Since interpretation and implementation of the tax laws are the domain of the IRS and the courts, Awardees should consult their local IRS office about the applicability of the current tax code to their own situations, and for information about tax code changes, taxability of fellowship stipends, and the proper steps to be taken regarding their tax obligation.

d. Some helpful tax advice and other information may be found at the NIH Postdoctoral/Clinical Fellows Committee FELCOM web site:

<ftp://helix.nih.gov/felcom/index.html>

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

H. Outside Work

Outside employment for fellows is at the discretion of the Institute, subject to the same guidelines as NIH employees, provided the fellows are able to meet the requirement of a minimum of 40 hours a week on their fellowship assignment. Fellows should submit a memorandum requesting approval of outside work through Division channels with final approval by the Division Director.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

I. Publications and Patents

The publication and patenting of scientific discoveries by fellows are governed by the same policies as for other scientists employed or in training at NIH. Fellows must not provide outside organizations or

individuals with information that could form the basis of intellectual property rights for the Government.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

J. Termination of Award for Cause

The following is provided as a guideline for the early termination of awards for pre- and post-doctoral fellows under the CRTA.

1. A Fellow's assignment to a specific research group may be appropriately terminated early, prior to the end of his/her formal award period, for several reasons:
 - a. "incompatibility" between the Postdoctoral fellow and the preceptor;
 - b. unsatisfactory performance by the Postdoctoral fellow;
 - c. serious misbehavior on the part of the fellow.
2. In situation (a) above, a transfer may be arranged where appropriate and is the responsibility of the Laboratory/Branch Chief or, if necessary, the Division Director, to negotiate. In appointing a fellow, the Lab/Br Chief generally assumes the responsibility for providing a suitable training experience for a specific time period. Therefore, the Lab/Br Chief to the extent practical should find a more suitable situation for the fellow and be ready to support him/her, even in the program of another Lab/Br, or of another Division, should there be no mutually satisfactory place internally.
3. For situation (b) above, termination prior to the completion of the appointment period must be based on documentation of unsatisfactory performance. Furthermore, the fellow should have been notified in writing that his/her performance is unsatisfactory and given an opportunity to improve. Such notification must be specific and must outline suggestions for achieving a satisfactory level of performance. The decision to terminate the appointment should be communicated to the fellow as soon as possible prior to the termination date. The decision to terminate the

appointment rests with the Director of the Division in which the fellow is appointed, but can be delegated to the fellow's Laboratory/Branch Chief. In the latter instance, the fellow may ask the Division Director to reconsider the contemplated action. With careful selection procedures, early termination of appointments for unsatisfactory performance should be rarely necessary.

A decision not to renew an appointment does not constitute early termination in the context of these guidelines. Nevertheless, every fellow should be notified in writing that he/she will not be reappointed. Decisions not to renew appointments do not require formal justification to the fellow.

4. In situation c. above, swift, no-nonsense disciplinary action or even termination may be appropriate, and standard ICD procedures should be applied.

Under CRTA, Merit Systems Protection Board appeal rights are not conferred or apply since trainees are not considered Government employees.

An employee relations specialist should be contacted (at x66862) as soon as deficiencies or conduct problems occur.

Awards may be revoked in whole or in part by the Division Director in collaboration with the Deputy Director for Management, acting upon specific requests by the Laboratory/Branch Chief, provided that the revocation may not include repayment of funds that participants have already received. Awards may be terminated prior to their normal expiration date for serious personal or scientific misconduct. Awards may also be terminated based on a finding that the Fellow has failed to comply with the terms and conditions of the award or to carry out the purpose for which it was made. Any termination proposal must provide an opportunity for the Fellow to reply before a decision is rendered. Divisions should notify OFM immediately when an award is terminated for cause, to avoid the possibility of overpayment.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

K. Retention and Availability of Records

Records on awards will be maintained in accordance with Privacy Act System Notice Number 09-25-0158. Only staff directly involved in the CRTA Program may be granted access to these records. The records may be disclosed to appropriate NIH personnel, individuals working under a personal services contract, and other individuals performing functions for NIH who do not technically have the status of agency employees, if they need the records in the performance of their agency functions. Access to file folders is controlled by system personnel. Records may be removed from the files only with the approval of the system manager or other authorized employees. Data stored in the automated system is accessed through the use of keywords known only to authorized personnel.

Records are retained and disposed of under the authority of NIH Manual Chapter 1743, "Keeping and Destroying Records", Appendix 1, NIH Records Control Schedule, Item 2300-300-3. Authorized Disposition: Destroy either when there is no further administrative need for the file or 2 years after participant leaves the program, whichever comes first.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

L. Delegations of Authority and Award Exceptions

Delegated Areas of Authority	NCI Dir	NCIDiv Dir	Lab/Br Chief
CRTA			
1. Approve initial & renewals within provisions at set stipend amount			X
2. Approve supplemental funding from outside fellowship - Augmented up to CRTA set stipend considering other allowances		X	
3. Approve stipends in excess of set amount	X		
4. Approve initial award if fellow has more than 5, but less than 8 years of relevant postdoctoral experience		X	
5. Supplemental training at outside institution	X		
6. Approve terminal 3 rd year for non-students in Categories 2 and 3	EO		
7. Approve renewal beyond 3 rd year for doctoral degree candidates in Category 4	EO		
8. Approve terminal 6 th year for Categories 5 and 6	X		

9. Approve transfer/reassignment between Divisions		X	
10. Revoke fellowship		X	
11. Accelerated Pay Adjustments (less than 52 weeks from previous)	X		
12. Approve Other Exceptions to Provisions	X		

In applying established program policies and practices to individual cases, there may be occasions when Lab/Branch/Office officials believe that exceptions are warranted. Requests for exceptions must be fully justified in writing, and must include a concise summary of the nature or, and basis for, the exception. Requests must be addressed to the NCI Director, who has final approval authority, and be routed through the respective Lab/Br Chief, Division Director, and the Deputy Director for Management.

=====

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA)

M. Equal Employment Opportunities

This award program fully supports NCI's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) initiative through (1) an affirmative action commitment to recruit from representative pools of candidates and to promote networking and outreach for under represented communities, (2) workplace diversity by developing the potential of all fellows in meeting mission goals by providing career development opportunities for all, (3) zero tolerance for harassment and discrimination, and (4) reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities in accordance with Federal and NIH regulations and policies.